

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 05440 231632Z

70

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 OMB-01 DRC-01 NIC-01 AID-20 COME-00 /110 W

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R 231530Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1053

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, SK

SUBJ: SIKKIM ELECTIONS

REF: NEW DELHI 5064

1. THE RESULTS OF THE SIKKIM ELECTION WHICH BEGAN TEN DAYS AGO (REFTEL) SHOW A LANDSLIDE VICTORY FOR THE SIKKIM CONGRESS PARTY WHOSE CANDIDATES WERE ELECTED TO 29 OF THE 32 SEATS OF THE NEW ASSEMBLY. WHILE THE SIKKIM CONGRESS IS IN ESSENCE A NEPALI-DOMINATED PARTY, HALF THE CANDIDATES ELECTED UNDER ITS BANNER ARE (IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TERMS OF THE ELECTION) EITHER LEPCHAS OR BHUTIAS.

2. THE RIVAL SIKKIM NATIONAL PARTY AND THE UNITED INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES FORUM WERE APPARENTLY INEFFECTIVE AT CAMPAIGNING AND TOO SPLIT INTERNALLY TO MAKE A GOOD SHOWING. THE RESULTS OF THE ELECTION APPEAR TO BE A SETBACK FOR THE CHOGYAL, WHO PERHAPS SENSED THE DRIFT OF EVENTS WHEN HE MADE A STATEMENT ON APRIL 21 AFFIRMING HIS COMMITMENT TO SIKKIM'S CLOSE

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PAGE 02 NEW DE 05440 231632Z

ASSOCIATION WITH INDIA AND PRAISING INDIAN ASSISTANCE.

3. THE NEW ASSEMBLY IS EXPECTED TO CONVENE FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MID-MAY. AT THAT TIME, THE SCENE MAY BE SET FOR NEW POLITICAL PROBLEMS AS THE OPOULARLY ELECTED SIKKIM CONGRESS MAJORITY MAY BEGIN TO PRESS FOR GREATER CONCESSIONS ON POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, AND SOCIAL ISSUES. THE CHOGYAL'S AUTHORITY AND POWER IS ALREADY SO RESTRICTED THAT IT WILL ESSENTIALLY BE UP TO THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT TO DETERMINE HOW FAR THEY WISH TO LET THE NEPALI MAJORITY GO. THE SIKKIM CONGRESS IN THE PAST HAS STOOD FOR DIRECT ASSOCIATION OF SIKKIM WITH INDIA, AND ITS FORMAL INCORPORATION INTO THE UNION. SPEAKING NOW WITH THE AUTHENTIC "VOICE OF THE PEOPLE" AS REFLECTED TRHOUGH A UNION ELECTION COMMISSION SURPervised ELECTION, IT MAY BE MORE DIFFICULT FOR THE GOI TO RESIST THIS PRESSURE. OUR ASSUMPTION UP UNTIL NOW HAS BEEN--AND STILL IS--THAT THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT DOES NOT WISH TO CHANGE THE CURRENT RELATIONSHOP BETWEEN INDIA AND SIKKIM OR TO HAVE A SIKKIM THAT IS DOMINATED BY NAPALIS.

MOYNIHAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ELECTION RESULTS, LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS, POLITICAL PARTIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 APR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MorefiRH
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974NEWDE05440
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740095-0756
From: NEW DELHI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740421/aaaaasrn.tel
Line Count: 79
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: NEW DELHI 5064
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MorefiRH
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14-Aug-2002 by elyme>; APPROVED <12-Sep-2002 by MorefiRH>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SIKKIM ELECTIONS
TAGS: PINT, SK
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005